

Application No. 09/858,065
Amendment "A" dated June 6, 2005
Reply to Office Action mailed May 23, 2005

REMARKS

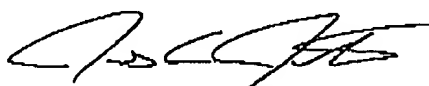
The first Office Action, mailed May 23, 2005, considered claims 1-34. Of those claims, claims 19-34 were allowed and claims 1-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 (c) as being anticipated by Mercier (U.S. Patent No. 6,865,747).¹

By this paper, all of the cancelled claims (1-18) have been cancelled, such that all of the rejections of record are now moot. It will be appreciated, however, that these claim cancellations have been made merely to expedite the issuance of the allowed claims 19-34. Accordingly, applicant reserves the right to challenge the purported assertions and rejections made in the last office action, including any official notice, at any appropriate time in the future, should it arise, such as, for example, during prosecution of any related applications. In fact, Applicants currently intend to file a continuation to pursue and more fully prosecute the cancelled claims (1-18) following this amendment.

Inasmuch as there are no remaining objections or rejections of record, Applicants respectfully submit that the application with pending claims 19-34 should now be allowed. In the event that the Examiner finds remaining impediment to a prompt allowance of this application that may be clarified through a telephone interview, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney.

Dated this 6 day of June, 2005.

Respectfully submitted,



RICK D. NYDEGGER
Registration No. 28,651
JENS C. JENKINS
Registration No. 44,803
Attorney for Applicant
Customer No. 047973

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¹ Although the prior art status of the cited art is not being challenged at this time, Applicants reserve the right to challenge the prior art status of the cited art at any appropriate time, should it arise, such as in a related application.